

From: Brian Gockley
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/27/02 9:32am
Subject: Microsoft and Monopolys

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Thank you also for you persistent efforts to review this large and important case. I have very little to say that has not already been said, but would like to take this opportunity for public input to do so. I have small business experience with several Operating Systems including Windows, Macintosh, Atari and Amiga. I was a computer store manager that sold these products, a trade publication journalist and a trade show promoter who ran computer shows in CT.

In all of these positions, we were always pushed as much by individual buyers as by Microsoft into selling Windows. Even though most people recognized it as an inferior product, the fact that they used it at work was the determining factor in what they purchased for home use. In theory, this is how the free market is supposed to work: unfettered competition bringing out the best product as the market winner, with a great deal of innovation.

It is hard to argue that there has not been innovation in the computer industry, however, the question is whether it was encouraged or restricted by Microsoft's Windows OS. I think the challenge for the judge is discerning how the mechanics of the industry mean that the OS that sits on top of the hardware controlled instead of opened the market. Because the OS and the hardware have been linked, software developers and programmers have had to write separate versions of all their program. If any one of the companies could have written software that ran on anyone's hardware, then we would have had a very different market. Instead, great innovations like the Atari OS, the Amiga OS, the NeXT OS, GeOS and others would still be around. Other innovations like the Unix/Linux development would not have had to duplicate simple programs like word processors, etc. to run on their own OS. The loss of the code and development time that these innovators wasted is directly because of the unbreakable link between the Intel hardware and the Microsoft software.

The field is far from level, thank you for addressing the manner in which this situation has developed. I hope that your solution encourages innovation and open standards.

Thank You,

Brian Gockley

